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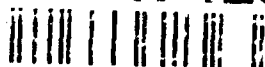
**'Comprehensive Engagement' and
'Crisis Management':
Assessing Australia's Southeast Asian Strategy**

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Thomas-Durell Young

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Dr. Thomas-Durell Young

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Strategic Studies Institute
US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks
Forbes Ave, Root Hall, Bldg 122
Carlisle, PA 17013-5050

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The author examines Australia's relationship with its Southeast Asian neighbors. As a European country with a geographic appendage to this region, Australia's relationship with other countries was defined by unpopular policies or within the context of its "great and powerful friends," Britain and the United States. However, since withdrawal of British forces and failure of U.S.-led strategies of military intervention in Vietnam, Australia has been forced to come to terms with its geographic realities. Although it remains predominantly an Anglo-Saxon country, Australia is increasingly multicultural, and links to Southeast Asia are growing rapidly.

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**'COMPREHENSIVE ENGAGEMENT' AND 'CRISIS MANAGEMENT':
ASSESSING AUSTRALIA'S SOUTHEAST ASIAN STRATEGY**

Thomas-Durell Young

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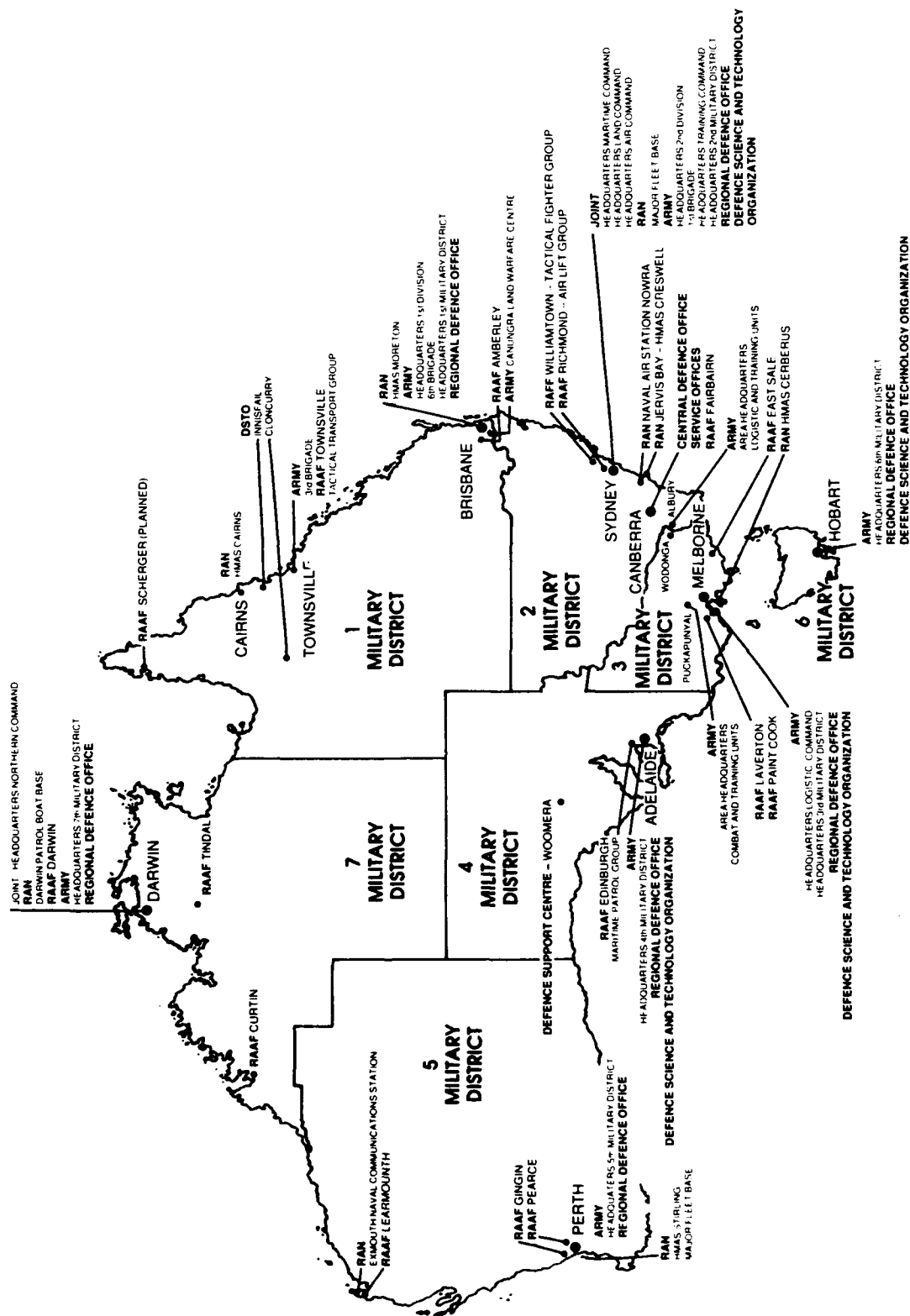
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Australia's Principal Defence Locations



**'COMPREHENSIVE ENGAGEMENT' AND 'CRISIS MANAGEMENT':
ASSESSING AUSTRALIA'S SOUTHEAST ASIAN STRATEGY**

It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that Australian perceptions of the Southeast Asian region have waxed and waned between ambivalence and apathy, fear and loathing. As a European country, which is a geographic appendage to Southeast Asia, Australia's relationship with the region for many years was defined by unpopular policies (i.e., white only immigration), or within the context of its "great and powerful friends," Britain and the United States. However, after having experienced the withdrawal of British forces from Southeast Asia and the failure of the U.S.-led strategy of the military intervention in Vietnam, Australia, as a nation, has been forced to come to terms with geographic realities. Whereas Australia remains predominantly an Anglo-Saxon country, it is increasingly multicultural and links to Southeast Asia are growing rapidly.

Parallel with this new political reorientation to Southeast Asia, Australia has had to alter its foreign and defense policies in recent years in order to improve its diplomatic and security stance in the region. Significantly, Canberra has assumed the task of defending its expansive and underpopulated northern area and, if required, engaging in effective crisis management. In the process, Australia has had to overcome significant institutional inertia and long-standing attitudes in its defense establishment to support a newly

articulated defense strategy of "defense in depth," as articulated in its 1987 white paper, Defence of Australia 1987.¹ In addition to providing needed direction to defense planners, one of the major elements of this new strategy is in support of Canberra's desire to pursue a more effective foreign policy, "Comprehensive Engagement with Southeast Asia."² And, in the event of a failure of its regional foreign policy, then its strategy of defense in depth, which includes sophisticated strike elements in the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) inventory (e.g., submarines and F-111s), could be employed. However, in a general sense, the intention of both regional foreign and defense policies is to support a national strategy of deterrence.

This constitutes truly a significant step in Australia's external orientation. The Labor governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating have moved to change these foreign policies and defense structures to ensure that Canberra will play a more constructive role in region.³ After all, while it is questionable whether President Richard Nixon ever intended that his "Guam Doctrine" was relevant to Australia,⁴ the mere fact that the United States is significantly reducing its regional military presence⁵ validates the government's policy of wanting significantly to improve its defense capabilities to operate throughout the north.

Fundamentally, this new national strategy underscores the limits placed on Canberra's ability unilaterally to act in the region. To date, it has had difficulty paying the cost of developing defense infrastructure to enable operations in the North, increasingly the ADF's primary area of orientation,⁶ without degrading activities and facilities elsewhere.⁷ In fact, these problems in implementing the new national military strategy make a positive and regionally-oriented foreign policy all the more essential.

The purpose of this essay is to describe and analyze the reorientation of Australia's defense policy the better to conduct a credible crisis management operation in Southeast Asia. The essay will emphasize Australia's campaign to forge a new and positive relationship with the Southeast Asian region. Moreover, an assessment of Australia's maritime security arrangements in that region, and the rationale behind them, will also be provided. This essay will argue that while Australian maritime security perceptions of the Southeast Asian region retain some of their cold war veneer, and may continue to do so for some time, Australian strategy recognizes that it is essential that all three services of the ADF jointly must be able to operate in the region. However, it needs to be stressed that given the geographic size of, and the proliferation of sophisticated weaponry in, the region, it would be unlikely that Canberra would ever commit itself to

unilateral combat operations, outside of national defense. Rather, such military options would most likely only be part of operations sanctioned by regional or global security organizations.

Background.

As a member of the British Empire and later Commonwealth, Australian security objectives and interests in Southeast Asia prior to the Second World War were coordinated through British-led regional security arrangements. This resulted in an antipodean commitment of financial resources and manpower directed to the garrisoning of Singapore and Malaysia. However, this was not done without considerable disagreement and debate within Australia. After Federation and during the 1930s, there was considerable internal debate whether Australia should develop its own national capability to defend itself.⁸ And indeed, this anxiety over defending/garrisoning Malaysia and Singapore extended well into the 1970s when, in 1973, the last Australian ground forces in Singapore were withdrawn.⁹

As Australian national security was defined in a collective sense in conjunction with its British and American allies in the post-war era, and supported by the stationing of forces in Southeast Asia, it is not surprising that Australian maritime security arrangements were made within allied structures to support this strategy.¹⁰ Indeed, one could argue that maritime security arrangements among senior Australian,

U.S., British, and New Zealand naval officers actually preceded the Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States (ANZUS). The outcome of these initiatives was the establishment of a naval control and protection of shipping arrangement, codified by the 1951 Radford-Collins agreement. This agreement, which still exists, was established to provide for the Western maritime security of the Southwest Pacific.¹¹

The original intent of these plans was that they would be implemented in the event of a global conflict with the Soviet Union; however, the principles and arrangements would be applicable for lesser levels of maritime conflict as well. Despite the end of the cold war, there does not appear to be any noticeable move on the part of any of the partners to discontinue the arrangement. One could assume that should the need arise, it could be invoked in a crisis for the purpose of providing for aspects of the maritime security of Australia's northern waters. Indeed, publicly available information on Radford-Collins clearly indicates that the arrangement has long been altered to meet new security conditions in the Western Pacific and Eastern Indian oceans. For instance, following the growth in Soviet naval deployments in the Pacific region in the mid-1970s, cooperative surveillance and reconnaissance arrangements were expanded.¹² For Australia's part, in 1981, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) P-3 Orion long-range maritime patrol aircraft began operating from RAAF Base Butterworth to

provide allied surveillance of parts of the South China Sea and the Eastern Indian Ocean.¹³ And, despite the end of the cold war, and the all but complete withdrawal of Soviet/Russian forces from Vietnam, these patrols continue.¹⁴

What needs to be understood about these arrangements is that they largely defined how Australia pursued its maritime security objectives in Southeast Asian waters for many years.¹⁵ Consequently, these allied "arrangements" become an important influence in the development of Australian defense force structure, particularly the Royal Australian Navy. Yet, as pointed out by Paul Dibb in his seminal Review of Australian Defense Capabilities, while acknowledging its usefulness to exercise procedural doctrine and command and control,

...it has particular limitations in time of threat. Its convoying and escort connotations, which extend more than 2000 nautical miles west of Australia to the mid-Indian Ocean, suggest a disproportionate commitment of scarce resources to activities which may be only marginally related to our national interest and capability.

Even more critical was his argument that as an operational arrangement between the RAN and its allied counterparts, under traditional treaty practice, this did not constitute a formal international "agreement."¹⁶ Yet, for many years, "allied" commitments, particularly Radford-Collins for the RAN, was used by naval officials as constituting a key determinant in the Navy's force development.¹⁷ While an anathema today in Australia's current defense planning process, which allows only

those capabilities directly relevant to the defense of Australia proper,¹⁸ during the period of forward defense in Southeast Asia from the mid-1950s until 1973, this force development policy was sound.

The problem, however, with both this strategy and accompanying force structure was that it obviated against the realization of a distinctive national regional policy, let alone an effective independent national defense capability. The end of the Vietnam War and the withdrawal of British forces from the Far East forced Australian politicians and officials to come to terms with the need to address unilaterally Australia's political and security place in Southeast Asia. While allied assistance could be assumed particularly in conflicts on the high end of the conflict spectrum, lower-level contingencies might have to be faced by the ADF alone.¹⁹ In consequence, foreign and defense policy needed to be drastically reoriented if Australia were to influence the security posture of its exposed northern expanse.²⁰

Northern Orientation or Obsession?

Hence, since the early to mid-1970s, when Australian defense planners began to argue the case for attaining greater national defense self-reliance, explicit in their rationale²¹ was the need to improve substantially the woefully neglected defense infrastructure in the country's barren and sparsely-populated north and northwest.²² Beginning with the

publication of the important 1972 Defense White Paper, which initially advocated these reforms, and culminating in the publication of its 1987 counterpart, The Defence of Australia 1987, substantial progress has been made in developing defense infrastructure and increasing the ADF's presence in the north and northwest.²³ The rationale for this policy initiative has been twofold: first, to establish the capability to conduct military operations in and around the north of the country, and second, to give force planners a guiding objective in the development of the ADF, i.e., the actual defense of Australia. This is not an insignificant move in historical terms in that, as far back as before the First World War, it was estimated that should Imperial arrangements and latter forward defense fail, Australia would be unable to defend its northern areas (the "Brisbane Line Strategy").²⁴ In the process of effecting these initiatives, the government's objective has been to establish a defense presence in the north to deter potential hostile adversaries, and, if required, to defend Australian vital interests.

The results of these initiatives have not been unimpressive. In terms of supporting air operations, the system of air fields in the north has been upgraded.²⁵ In addition to the long existing RAAF bare-base at Learmonth, on Northwest Cape, a new bare-base at Derby, WA (RAAF Curtin) has been completed, another one near Weipa on the Cape York

Peninsula (RAAF Scherger) is being planned, and one at Gove across the Gulf of Carpentaria may eventually be built. More importantly, a new manned air base, RAAF Tindal, 330 kilometres south of Darwin, is now home to a squadron of F/A-18 fighters.²⁶ A wide area surveillance radar is being developed, the Jindalee over-the-horizon radar system, which will substantially improve Australian national surveillance capabilities to its north. One would expect that this capability, once it is fully operational, would provide a substantial capability effectively to conduct crisis management, should the need ever arise.²⁷ This would be particularly the case if it were augmented by a long-sought-after airborne early-warning radar system.²⁸

The RAN has expanded its activities in the north as well, however, in a much more modest manner, but with an eye for expansion in crisis. Modern patrol boat facilities now exist at Cairns and Darwin, with plans to expand blue-water support facilities at the latter location. To improve the support of the fleet, a modern naval facility is now in full operation south of Perth (HMAS Stirling). The base gives the RAN an improved capability to sustain and support operations in Southeast Asian waters. And, not insignificantly, HMAS Stirling will be the primary base for the new class of Collins-class submarines currently being built at Port Adelaide, SA. Lastly, the acquisition of Fremantle-class patrol boats has

enabled the RAN to increase significantly its presence in support of civil missions in northern waters.²⁹

The Army has also been affected by the shift northward. It has created surveillance/reconnaissance reserve units, made up largely of local inhabitants, in the Northern regions: the 51st Far North Queensland Regiment, North West Mobile Force, and the Pilbara Regiment. These units conduct surveillance operations during peacetime and in the event of an incursion into the north, they would provide tactical intelligence on enemy movements.³⁰ As part of Army Presence in the North plan, the Army will complete its transfer of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment to the Darwin area in 1993, to be followed by a brigade of 2200 soldiers by 2001.³¹

To be sure, these efforts to improve defense infrastructure and maintain a permanent military presence in the north have not been without financial sacrifice. This has been justified, in part, since these military facilities and deployments directly support civil authorities and execute key missions (e.g., sovereignty protection), which have long gone ignored in this vast and underpopulated region. However, with minor exceptions (e.g., the Returned Services League),³² the shift northwards has enjoyed bipartisan political support,³³ particularly in the Northern Territory where defense spending has become a major economic activity.³⁴ However, potential

problems, which have not been given attention in the defense debate, remain associated with this new stationing of forces.

As the ADF becomes increasingly oriented toward operating in the north, Canberra needs to be careful not to allow this new orientation to become perceived as becoming an obsession. For instance, in the context of Australia's security relationship with the United States, should Canberra continue to direct increasingly more resources to the north, which are not applicable to other areas, the perception may be encouraged that Australian defense has become self-limiting. This could particularly be troublesome for the Army,³⁵ given the relatively small size of its maneuver elements (e.g., seven maneuver battalions, within a three brigade structure), out of an overall size of 30,000.³⁶

The orientation question is directly related to the second point: the implication of these moves on the capabilities of the ADF. It is not a question of how much of the Australian Army, for instance, is to be stationed at Darwin, or how much it eventually will cost to bring the Jindalee Over-The-Horizon-Radar into service,³⁷ but rather how much of the ADF's attention will be focused on, and tied to, the "Top End." To be sure, the need for Canberra to improve its surveillance and military presence in this region is without question. Yet, one could argue that the employment of civil assets for surveillance would be much cheaper for the government.³⁸

Moreover, there has been a singular lack of hard analysis and critique of the manner by which the government has decided to improve the defense of the north. In contrast, Alan Stephens has recently argued that an improved capability to defend the air/sea gap, primarily with air and submarine assets (vice ground units), would be more cost effective, and capable of addressing a greater range of contingencies, to include crisis management.³⁹

Australian Regional Policy.

The shift northwards was accompanied, rather belatedly, in 1989 in the form of Foreign Minister Gareth Evans's Ministerial Statement, Australia's Regional Security, which announced a new diplomatic approach to regional security issues. While acknowledging the need for an improved and constructive attitude to regional concerns and aspirations ("Comprehensive Engagement"), a strong sense of regional realities and potential trouble areas was also identified.⁴⁰ Indeed, these potentially unwanted developments in Southeast Asia necessitate this new approach to regional security. An example of this policy is seen in Senator Evans's 1990 multilateral initiative for the region to begin discussions leading to confidence- and security-building measures.⁴¹ This initiative was met with outright disapproval by the Bush administration,⁴² which, however, did not dissuade Canberra from continuing to pursue this issue. While not the first disagreement with Washington

on regional policy, this issue did constitute a substantive and symbolic divergence of objectives.

Indeed, given developments in the region and the diminution in the U.S. military presence, Canberra will be forced to negotiate a difficult path between maintaining cordial relations with its primary ally, the United States, while attempting to develop new diplomatic inroads into the region. As to the former issue, the most obvious reason for Canberra to continue peacetime security ties with the United States, which one would suppose both the government and opposition would agree to, is that of maintaining a treaty relationship which, in extremis, is the guarantor of Australia's national security. Whether or not the ANZUS Security Treaty does indeed guarantee Canberra's ultimate national security is an issue which is beyond the scope of this paper.⁴³ What is important and relevant to this paper is that Australian governments have continued to base their fundamental security planning on this premise.⁴⁴ While one can question whether Australia's security outlook includes a military threat to it in the foreseeable future, an assessment of key developments in Southeast Asia is sobering.

The increase in arms purchases in South and East Asia since the 1980s has resulted in a sizeable growth in the quantitative, and significantly, the qualitative military capabilities of many states. For instance, Indonesia and

Singapore have purchased F-16s and Harpoon anti-ship missiles (interestingly, from the United States), while India has substantially improved its military inventory, particularly in strike capabilities.⁴⁵ The qualitative advantage the ADF has long prided itself as having over its regional neighbors has allowed Canberra to maintain small, but more capable, standing forces. However, the problems associated with these improvements in military capability have not gone unnoticed by the Australian government and are identified as potential problems (particularly for aerial and maritime capabilities) in Australia's Strategic Planning in the 1990s.⁴⁶ Defence Minister Robert Ray's remarks in this regard are relevant:

I am not saying that these large Asian powers will become a military threat. Rather I am suggesting that the withdrawal of Soviet and United States forces will create opportunities for change. How China, India and Japan develop their military power in this new situation will be a particularly sensitive issue.⁴⁷

This is a situation that Australia has not had to face since the purchase by Indonesia of Whiskey-type submarines and Tu-16 Badger aircraft from the Soviet Union in the early-1960s.

Leaving aside the issue of the political intentions of these states, the possession of military hardware is only one part of a very complex equation which determines military capability. The mere possession of modern weapon-carrying platforms and sensors does not necessarily create combat effectiveness. In this respect, then, the U.S. relationship

takes on continued importance for Australia. The ability to exercise with the most sophisticated military establishment in the world has had, and will increasingly have, singular value to the ADF. Thus, in addition to the need to maintain an acceptable degree of interoperability which would allow Australian and U.S. forces to deploy and fight together if required, exercising with the United States offers the ADF many insights into modernization trends in technology and doctrine.

To sum up, since the latter 1980s Australian officials have had to realize that a new approach to Southeast Asia is unavoidable. While the antecedents of this policy predate the end of the cold war, the demise of East-West bloc tensions has lent greater exigency to this objective. Canberra has attempted to upgrade and improve relations with regional states, particularly through the utilization of military-to-military contacts. This has been the case bilaterally, for example, with Singapore,⁴⁸ and multilaterally, e.g., the Western Pacific Naval Symposium.⁴⁹ Indeed, the case of military-to-military contacts with Indonesia has aided in a substantial diplomatic rapprochement between the two countries.⁵⁰ This positive diplomatic stance has been preceded by a significant improvement of defense facilities in the north and an increased ADF presence. As such, should a crisis develop in Australia's near north, the ADF would be able to respond rapidly with sophisticated capabilities. However,

given the ADF's continued limited combat support and particularly combat service support capabilities, a crisis of duration or over a wide geographic area would necessitate U.S. assistance.

Assessment.

With this brief overview of Australia's defense shift northwards and Canberra's approach to Southeast Asia, it is appropriate to assess Australian policy toward the region and supporting strategy. To the general question whether this a proper approach to take toward the region, the answer has to be affirmative. To be sure, one could argue that these regional political initiatives find their antecedents in Defence of Australia 1987 and were only codified diplomatically afterwards (1989) in Australia's Regional Security. Nonetheless, Australia's diplomatic initiatives (particularly supporting the creation a regime of regional CSBMs) and military cooperative proposals (a sealane security arrangement for Southeast Asian waters)⁵¹ have generally been well-received by regional states, notwithstanding ASEAN's rejection of the Australian and Canadian proposal to transform itself into an Asian version of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.⁵² Where difficulties could possibly arise is in regard to maintaining cordial security relations with the United States, while at the same time sponsoring major regional diplomatic issues that Washington has opposed, i.e., a multilateral security dialogue

in East Asia. Fortunately for Canberra, the Clinton administration, as opposed to its predecessor, has been receptive to at least studying this particular initiative, which should remove a festering sticking point in Australian-U.S. diplomatic relations.⁵³

At the same time, this approach to regional security indicates a fundamental understanding on the part of Canberra of its severe limitations in influencing events in the region. Therefore, a constructive diplomacy which supports, if not always totally agrees with, regional aspirations is appropriate. However, the ADF's shift northward has not gone uncriticized particularly by some Indonesians.⁵⁴ Fortunately, the ADF's military-to-military initiatives and a desire on its part to understand what Desmond Ball has called South and Southeast Asia's unique strategic culture⁵⁵ have combined to obviate wide-spread political condemnation of what, if improperly handled, could have been interpreted as a negative and atavistic response to military and political developments on the part of Australia's regional neighbors.

Thus, Australia must be prepared to deal effectively with crises in its "Near North," under rather significant constraints. Canberra cannot be seen as being too closely aligned to the United States, for fear of being viewed as not having an independent voice in regional affairs. At the same time, Southeast Asian states are increasingly uncomfortable

with the reduction in the U.S. force presence in the region. Canberra's continued alliance with the United States, while not critical in regional daily diplomatic affairs, does continue to engage the U.S. Armed Forces in the region. Given the ADF's structural limitations, the U.S. alliance remains of considerable value to Canberra should a crisis in its region become protracted. Should a crisis involve U.S. assistance and require a maritime response (e.g., protection of shipping), long-standing operational arrangements between the RAN and the U.S. Navy could be invoked; and for other scenarios, their long cooperative experience would facilitate conducting combined operations. However, two key defense structural issues could impede an effective application of the ADF for crisis management in its near north.

First, there appears to remain a lingering disagreement between defense planners and Australian officials as to where the ADF should be employed. The 1987 defense white paper explicitly states that the ADF is to be structured for the defense of Australia,⁵⁶ however, the ADF retains the capability to be deployed, essentially, anywhere.⁵⁷ Subsequently, Australian defense officials have stated that they feel ADF operations outside of Australia proper should be limited to Australia's immediate region.⁵⁸ However, in recent years, the ADF has been engaged in numerous peacekeeping operations throughout the

globe. At present, 1500 ADF personnel are serving in peacekeeping operations throughout the world.⁵⁹

The recent deployment of a battalion-size task force from the Operational Deployment Force to assist in the U.N. humanitarian missions in Somalia, in addition to the large number of Army units participating in other peacekeeping missions throughout the world (Cambodia, and perhaps Mozambique in the immediate future),⁶⁰ has drawn attention to the peacetime operational limitations in the Army's already relatively small order of battle.⁶¹ There would appear to be a need, therefore, for Canberra, either to limit its peacekeeping operations to the area of its foreign policy orientation (i.e., Southeast Asia), or expand particularly the Army's ability to conduct peacekeeping missions, while retaining a capability to support a key element of crisis management (i.e., military escalation) in the Southeast Asian region.

Second, as a small, technologically sophisticated defense force, the ADF does not have the financial base, either unilaterally to develop major weapon systems, or to support and supply them. In consequence, technological sophistication brings with it a dependence for follow-on supply and even major modernization programs from the originating supplying country. This dependent situation is, of course, a truism of modern defense technology and Australia shares this condition with most of its Western allies. The implications of this situation

over the years has not worked to the ADF's operational independence, notwithstanding its technological sophistication. It has long been the policy of the government and the Department of Defence to acquire combat capabilities, often state-of-the-art, without complementing these forces with requisite combat support and combat service support formations.⁶² In view of the limited financial resources available for defense, when measured in relation to the envisaged missions for the ADF, a discernable degree of dependence on the United States was accepted in force planning and force development of the ADF.⁶³ Thus, importance was placed by the Department of Defence, particularly from the latter-1970s onward, on acquiring assurances from the United States on the availability of supply support when required.⁶⁴

With the disappearance of bloc tensions and entrance of the world into a new phase of more fluid relations between states, it would be well advised to revisit existing logistic support and supply arrangements. During the cold war, where the need to maintain alliance solidarity and to be prepared for a Blue on Red conflict were major concerns, the logistic relationship between Australia and the United States was politically acceptable and militarily appropriate. Without the backdrop of the cold war, the continuation of the current cooperative logistic support relationship may entail new and unforeseen accompanying implications. For instance, in a

regional conflict during the cold war in which Australia might become involved, irrespective of regional political sensitivities, it would be difficult to disassociate Australia's status as a formal U.S. ally in the context of the East-West balance. Therefore, a U.S. response would not only have implications for Washington's relations with Canberra, but with its NATO and Japanese allies as well.

In the new international environment, this element of alliance management has changed. One can conceive of crisis scenarios in Southeast Asia where it would be politically unwise for Australia and the United States to be seen as operating too closely in concert. Indeed, in line with stated Australian government policy to develop "Comprehensive Engagement" with Southeast Asia, Canberra's ability to act independently is required, which may include the unilateral employment of military forces.⁶⁵ Conversely, Washington's credibility as an honest broker to defuse a regional crisis in which Australia was a participant could be undermined if overt military support to the ADF were requested by Canberra. While acknowledging that this is highly speculative, altered political conditions require a reassessment of the previous dependent logistic support relationship, since it may no longer be mutually advantageous.

Canberra, therefore, should provide resources to its long-stated objective of truly accomplishing greater "self-

reliance," if it expects to engage in effective crisis management in Southeast Asia, i.e., the ability to escalate a military response and then sustain it unilaterally. What this requires, as noted in a recent parliamentary report on the ADF's stockholding and sustainability, is adopting an ADF stockholding policy (which it currently does not have), that reflects and supports of the defense planning process, and would enable independent joint ADF operations at a level higher than exists today.⁶⁶

Conclusion.

The lessons to be drawn from this review of Australia's regional diplomacy and strategy of supporting crisis management are quite clear. Canberra, being faced with a large geographic area to defend and relatively limited resources, has had little other choice but to concentrate its national diplomatic efforts on Southeast Asia and its limited defense resources to its north. In terms of its foreign policy objectives, Canberra has evinced a genuine effort to become an accepted regional partner. Given its limited financial resources and defense capabilities, it is not surprising that an essential element of this new diplomatic policy is to champion a multinational approach to East Asian security, even to the point beyond which ASEAN, for instance, feels comfortable going (i.e., becoming an Asian CSCE). As a country which has long harbored a national anxiety of vulnerability,⁶⁷ due to its emotional and geographic

isolation from its cultural roots, there is a degree of immediacy for Australia to work to ensure regional stability.

Should these policies and efforts fail, then Canberra must be prepared to act, conceivably unilaterally, to protect its interests and territory. While the alliance with the United States remains a key aspect of the country's ultimate security, the clear assumption for planners is that it would be imprudent to assume assistance in all circumstances. What is revealing about the Australian approach to planning for crisis management in the region, and indicative of the thought beyond it, is that it has heretofore taken a non-provocative approach. The ADF's envisaged ground presence in the north, albeit sizeable by the Army's standards, will remain modest and the new air bases being built there will remain unmanned (except for RAAF Tindal, and, to a much lesser extent, RAAF Darwin). Perhaps surprisingly, in light of the dominant maritime characteristic of the region, the ADF's maritime forces and capabilities have been down-played, although capabilities exist in Darwin and Perth to support their deployment to the region, if needed.

In essence, Australian diplomacy and strategy recognize that given the country's limited resources and regional political realities, there are few other acceptable policy options. It is beyond the capabilities, for instance, of the RAN to assume the deployment profile of the Royal Navy prior to its withdrawal from the region or that currently of the U.S.

Navy. Moreover, it needs to be recognized that given Australia's poor reputation in regional affairs in the past,⁶⁸ and the immense challenges facing the ADF in developing infrastructure in the north of Australia, let alone operating in that environment year-round, this policy is perforce one that will only fully come to fruition in the long term.

All in all, the objective by Canberra to forge new political ties with regional neighbors and create a widespread perception of being able to deter military threats to itself and to regional neighbors is sound in concept. Given the conditions facing Australia, it has little other choice. This does not mean that all of its diplomatic initiatives and defense planning decisions are necessarily correct. However, the overall objective of these policies is sensible. Indeed, assuming Canberra can achieve these ambitious diplomatic and defense objectives, while retaining a functioning security relationship with Washington, it may be unlikely that it will ever have to use the means to implement the crisis management structures and capabilities it has developed in the north. And even if it does not, Australia will, in the process, have come to terms with its regional situation and fashioned a productive political relationship with Southeast Asia.

ENDNOTES

1. See, Australia, Department of Defence, The Defence of Australia 1987, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service (AGPS), 1987, pp. 31-32.
2. See, Australia's Regional Security, Ministerial Statement by Senator the Hon. Gareth Evans, QC, Canberra, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, December 1989, particularly pp. 44-45.
3. See, K. S. Nathan, "Australia and Southeast Asia: from Cooperation to Constructive Engagement," The Round Table, No. 319, July 1991, pp. 335-348.
4. See David Jenkins's excellent essay which argues that President Nixon did not intend to include Australia in his new doctrine which would govern the employment of U.S. forces in Asia. See, Sydney Morning Herald, July 27, 1989.
5. See, Dick Cheney, Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy, Washington: Department of Defense, January 1993, pp. 21-23.
6. For background on the issue of the increasing import of the north in the ADF's orientation see, Desmond Ball and J. O. Langtry, eds., The Northern Territory in the Defence of Australia: Geography, History, Economy, Infrastructure and Defence Presence, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 63, Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC), Australian National University (ANU), 1990; and, idem, The Northern Territory in the Defence of Australia: Strategic and Operational Considerations, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 73, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, 1991.
7. For greater discussion on this issue see, Graeme Cheeseman, "Australian Defence: White Paper in the Red," Australian Journal of International Affairs, Volume 44, No. 2, August 1990, pp. 101-118; and, Thomas-Durell Young, "Australia's Defence Planning after the Cold War," The Pacific Review, Volume 4, No. 3, 1991, pp. 226-228.
8. See, John Mordike, An Army for a Nation: A History of Australian Military Developments, 1880-1914, North Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1992, pp. 165-190; and, John McCarthy, Australia and Imperial Defence, 1919-39: A Study in Air and Sea Power, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1976, pp. 55-63.

9. For background on this issue see, Henry S. Albinski, Australian External Policy under Labor: Content, Process and the National Debate, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977, pp. 240-245.

10. According to Vice-Admiral Ian MacDougal, Chief of Naval Staff of the RAN, "In the past, Australians have not had to take prime responsibility for their nation's maritime affairs....militarily, Australians have relied in significant part on the maritime power of allies to shield them from hostile forces." See, The Australian (Sydney), May 28, 1993.

11. See, Thomas-Durell Young, "ANZUS Naval Relations, 1951-1985," in Reflections on the Royal Australian Navy, ed. by T. R. Frame, et al., Kenthurst, NSW: Kangaroo Press, 1991, pp. 296-315.

12. Apparently, a major concern for Australia and New Zealand at the 1976 ANZUS Council meeting. For Australian attitudes going into the conference see, The Age (Melbourne), July 31, 1976. See as well, "Comment and Discussion: A Policy of Denial, or Armed Neutrality?", Pacific Defence Reporter, Volume 13, No. 3, September 1986, p. 3.

13. See, Australia, Department of Defence, Defence Report 1981, Canberra: AGPS, 1981, p. 4.

14. This is known as Operation Gateway and is conducted under an agreement between Malaysia and Australia. See, Australia, Department of Defence, Defence Report, 1991-1992, Canberra: AGPS, 1992, p. 66.

15. A distinct Australian naval doctrine, reflecting the RAN's sui generis operating environment, has only recently been written. See, W. S. G. Bateman and R. J. Sherwood, "Principles of Australian Maritime Operations," Working Paper No. 265, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, November 1992.

16. See, Paul Dibb, Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities, Report to the Minister for Defence, Canberra, AGPS, 1986, p. 47.

17. See, Thomas-Durell Young, Australia, New Zealand, and United States Security Relations, 1951-1986, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, p. 193.

18. For greater explanation behind Australia's distinct defense planning methodology see, Paul Dibb, The Conceptual Basis of Australia's Defence Planning and Force Structure Development, Canberra Paper on Strategy and Defence No. 88, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, 1992; and, Frank Lewincamp, Director, Concepts and

Capabilities, Force Development Branch, Department of Defence, "Strategic Guidance and Force Structure: The Force Development Process," FDA Presentation to Acquisition and Logistics Project Management Course, Canberra, July 21, 1992. The process is fully explained in, Australia, Department of Defence, Defence Instructions (General), ADMIN 05-1, (The Force Development Process), December 23, 1991, p. 3. A summary is found in, Australia, Department of Defence, Concepts and Capabilities Section, Force Development Branch, "The Force Development Process: From Strategic Guidance to Specific Capability Proposals--A Summary," revised July 14, 1992.

19. For some of the early thinking of how Australia would have to cope with this new situation see, Robert O'Neill, ed., The Defence of Australia: Fundamental New Aspects, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, 1976.

20. See, R. J. Angel, "Australia and Southeast Asia," in Independence and Alliance: Australia in World Affairs, 1976-1980, ed. by P. J. Boyce and J. R. Angel, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1983, pp. 223-243.

21. For one of the most eloquent arguments on this point see, former Minister for Defence Kim Beazley's Hermann Black Forum Lecture, Sydney, September 13, 1989, Washington, DC, Embassy of Australia, Australian Overseas Information Service, pp. 5-6 ("Continental Defense Only Option").

22. The policy basis for this change in defense orientation can be found in, Australia, Department of Defence, Australian Defence Review, Canberra: AGPS, 1972; and, Australia, Department of Defence, Australian Defence, November 1976, Canberra: AGPS, 1976. For commentary on this important change in defense policy and thinking see, O'Neill, The Defence of Australia; and, Ross Babbage, Rethinking Australia's Defence, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980.

23. See, Australia, Department of Defence, The Defence of Australia 1987, Canberra: AGPS, 1987, particularly pp. vii-x.

24. That the "Brisbane Line" strategy has its antecedents in the recommendations from Lord Kitchener following his 1910 visit to Australia to assess its defenses is a recent finding. See, The Morning Bulletin (Queensland), February 12, 1993.

25. See, Desmond Ball, "The Defence Presence in the Northern Territory," in The Northern Territory in the Defence of Australia: Geography, History, Economy, Infrastructure and Defence Presence, pp. 238-249.

26. See, Australia, Department of Defence, Force Structure Review, 1991, Canberra: AGPS, May 1991, pp. 17-18; 30.

27. See, Donald H. Sinnott, "The Jindalee Over-the-Horizon Radar System" in, Air Power: Global Developments and Australian Perspectives, ed. by Desmond Ball, Rushcutters Bay, NSW: Pergamon Press (Australia), 1988, pp. 209-235.

28. See, Dibb, Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities, pp. 131-132; and, Australian Business Magazine, April 1993, pp. 114-115.

29. See, Ball, "The Defence Presence in the Northern Territory," pp. 226-238.

30. Note that the current intelligence coordination and assessment system has come under criticism in a recent report, "Land Surveillance Forces, Army." See, The Canberra Times, March 7, 1993.

31. See, Force Structure Review, pp. 23-24; and, The Mercury (Hobart), October 2, 1992.

32. See, Northern Territory News (Darwin), August 26, 1992.

33. See, Northern Territory News (Darwin), August 27, 1992.

34. See, Northern Territory News (Darwin), August 19, 1992.

35. According to David Horner and Stewart Woodman, the Army "does not know what it is supposed to do, is unable to mount sustained operations, and is teetering on the brink of failure." See, The Sydney Morning Herald, July 5, 1991. For additional details see, David Horner, ed., Reshaping the Australian Army: Challenges for the 1990s, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 77, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, 1991.

36. The Military Balance, 1992-1993, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1992, p. 141.

37. For a status report on Jindalee see, "RAAF's First Over-the-Horizon Radar Begins Operations," Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter, August-September 1992, p. 16.

38. Cf., W.J. Meeke, "Coastal Surveillance: The Operator's Perspective," Air Power, p. 439; and, comments by Air Marshal David Evans, RAAF (ret) concerning the current ineffective civil force, Coastwatch, in, The Sydney Morning Herald, January 21, 1992.

39. See, Alan Stephens, "The Defence of Australia," in Defending the Air/Sea Gap: Exploiting Technology and Disproportionate Response to Defend Australia, ed. by Alan Stephens, Canberra: Australian Defence Studies Centre, Australian Defence Force Academy, 1992, pp. 1-25.

40. See, Australia's Regional Security, pp. 44-45.

41. For Minister Evans's proposal see, The International Herald Tribune (Paris), July 27, 1990.

42. For the Bush administration's policy on Asia see, James A. Baker, "America in Asia: Emerging Architecture for a Pacific Community," Foreign Affairs, Volume 70, No. 5, Winter 1991/92, particularly pp. 5-6.

43. A common argument against Australian-U.S. security relations is that the ANZUS Security Treaty does not contain any security guarantees to Australia. For example see, Gary Brown, Breaking the American Alliance: An Independent National Security Policy for Australia, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 54, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, 1989, pp. 61-66.

44. "The defence relationship with the United States gives confidence that in the event of a fundamental threat to Australia's security, US military support would be forthcoming." Defence of Australia 1987, pp. 3-5.

45. See, Australia's Regional Security, p. 13; and, The Financial Review (Sydney), June 17, 1992.

46. Australia's Strategic Planning in the 1990s, endorsed by Government, November 27, 1989, Canberra, September 1992, p. 27. See, as well, The Age (Melbourne), September 10, 1992.

47. Address by the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, to the Joint Service Staff College, "Australia and the Region: A Defence Perspective," Canberra, December 5, 1991.

48. For example, it has recently been announced that Singapore may set up a major military training base at Mt. Bundy, 120 kilometres southeast of Darwin. While Asian countries, such as Singapore, have exercised and trained in Australia in the past, a "base" would be a first and is a major success in expanding military-to-military contacts. See, Centralian Advertiser (Alice Springs), April 13, 1993.

49. See, The Australian (Sydney), May 28, 1993. The RAN's effort to expand discussions with regional navies has resulted in a recent book. Ross Babbage and Sam Bateman, eds., Maritime Change: Issues for Asia, St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, in association with the Royal Australian Navy and Australian Defence Industries, Ltd., 1993.

50. See, Australia's Regional Security, pp. 18-20; The Age (Melbourne), April 10, 1992; Canberra Times, June 28, 1991; and The Australian (Sydney), March 5, 1990.

51. See, The Canberra Times, May 8, 1993.

52. See, Time, May 17, 1993, pp. 38-39.

53. See, Sydney Morning Herald, April 3, 1993; and, The Age (Melbourne), April 2, 1993.

54. For reports of Indonesian criticism of the shift northward, particularly in light of the large Kangaroo-89 field exercise, see, The Age (Melbourne), August 10, 1989; and, The Australian (Sydney), May 30, 1989.

55. Desmond Ball, "Strategic Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region (With Some Implications for Regional Security Cooperation)," Working Paper No. 270, Canberra: SDSC, ANU, April 1993.

56. See, Defence of Australia 1987, pp. 31-32

57. "Options will always be available to Australian governments for assistance to allies, even though such assistance of itself will not be a force structure determinant." Ibid., p. 3.

58. Briefings, Department of Defence, Russell Offices, Canberra, December 1992; and, The Age (Melbourne), June 1, 1993.

59. See, The Australian (Sydney), May 28, 1993.

60. See, The Canberra Times, April 14, 1993.

61. See, The Australian (Sydney), January 18, 1993; The Canberra Times, January 19, 1993; and, The Australian (Sydney), January 22, 1993.

62. For the best (and indeed damning) assessment of the failure of successive governments, Defense Central and HQADF to come to terms with long-standing logistical shortcomings see, Australia, Parliament, Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and

Trade, Stockholding and Sustainability in the Australian Defence Force, Canberra, AGPS, 1992.

63. Note that Minister for Defence Kim Beazley admitted as much that the U.S. logistic support relationship was essential to maintain Australia's national security and to contribute to the security objectives Western Alliance. See, Kim C. Beazley, "Australia and the Asia Pacific Region: A Strategy of Self-Reliance and Alliance," address to the Washington Center of the Asia Society, June 1988.

64. See, Young, Australian, New Zealand, and United States Security Relations, pp. 89-90, particularly fn. 31 (p. 99).

65. Australia's Regional Security, pp. 44-45.

66. See, Stockholding and Sustainability in the Australian Defence Force, pp. 1-20; 65-66; and, D. Tramoundanis, "Defence Self-Reliance and the Sustainment of Operations," Paper No. 12, Canberra: Air Power Studies Centre, Royal Australian Air Force, April 1993, pp. 2-3. For an anecdotal example of the singular lack of thoughtful guidance for stocking and its potential impact on air operations in the north see, "Air Marshal J. W. Newham," in Australia's Air Chiefs, the proceedings of the "1992 RAAF History Conference," Canberra, Air Power Studies Centre, October 14, 1992, p. 67.

67. One should not forget that while Australia escaped invasion during the Second World War, Darwin was heavily bombed (243 lives were lost) on February 19, 1942. It and other Northern Territory centers suffered a total of 64 additional Japanese air strikes during the war: Geographic isolation sometimes brings with it vulnerability, a fact not lost on particularly those who live in the Northern Territory. See, Douglas Lockwood, Australia's Pearl Harbor: Darwin 1942, Australian War Classics, Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books Australia, 1984.

68. "None of this means that Australia should be less than fully sensitive in dealing with its regional neighbours....We sometimes forget...that Australia has a lot of history to live down." Australia's Regional Security, p. 42.